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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
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09/788,473

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Mikio Kawamoto

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EXAMINER

HOSSAIN, TANIM M

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

2145

DATE MAILED: 11/02/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

<b>Office Action Summary</b>	<b>Application No.</b>		<b>Applicant(s)</b>	
	09/788,473		KAWAMOTO, MIKIO	
	<b>Examiner</b>		<b>Art Unit</b>	
	Tanim Hossain		2145	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

### Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

### Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 05 August 2005.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**.                      2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

### Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-12 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-12 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

### Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

### Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All    b) ☐ Some \* c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

### Attachment(s)

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)  | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)<br>Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)                                   | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)             |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)<br>Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____  |

## DETAILED ACTION

### *Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103*

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 1-5 and 8-11 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Shiman et al (U.S. 2002/019827) in view of Hamp et al (U.S. 6,816,175).

As per claim 1, Shiman teaches an electronic mail transmission/reception client apparatus for transmitting and receiving electronic mails, comprising: a condition setting unit which sets in said electronic-mail transmission/reception apparatus a condition for forming a group of electronic mails from among electronic mails previously transmitted or received by the client apparatus, and displaying a listing comprising at least one title of at least one electronic mail of the group (paragraphs 0156, 0157, 0158); a sorting unit which sorts the electronic mails of the group into a hierarchical structure according to subordinate relationships between the electronic mails in the group (0156, 0157, 0158); and a list displaying unit which displays a list comprising indicia of at least one electronic mail which is sorted by said sorting (0156, 0157, 0158). Shiman does not specifically teach the arrangement of e-mails into a tree. Hamp teaches the arrangement of e-mails into a hierarchical tree with subordinate relations (column 7, lines 34-65). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to include the use of a tree in arranging electronic mail. The motivation for doing so lies in the fact that using a

tree system to organize a hierarchy would allow for organizational efficiency. Both inventions are from the same field of endeavor, namely the streamlined display and management of electronic mail.

As per claim 2, Shiman-Hamp teaches an electronic mail transmission/reception apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said sorting unit sorts said at least one information item according to attribute information which each of said at least one electronic mail has (Shiman: 0157).

As per claim 3, Shiman-Hamp teaches an electronic mail transmission/reception apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said attribute information is contained in a header of said at least one electronic mail (Shiman: 0157).

As per claim 4, Shiman-Hamp teaches an electronic-mail transmission/reception apparatus according to claim 1, further comprising a display information removing unit which removes a portion of information by said list displaying unit, according to display capacity of said list displaying unit (Shiman: figure 26; where the arrows used for scrolling constitutes a removal of some display information when scrolled up or down, which corresponds to the capacity of the list displaying unit).

Claim 5 is rejected on the same basis as claim 1, as claim 5 is a medium for implementing the apparatus of claim 1.

As per claim 7, Shiman-Hamp teaches a method used in an email client to display messages received by a user, the method comprising: accessing stored e-mail messages previously received by a user (Shiman: 0156, 0157, 0158); processing a group of like-titled e-mail messages to determine a hierarchical structure of the group comprising levels of e-mail

messages, where like-titled e-mail messages in a given layer are hierarchically related to e-mail messages in a level above based on their having been sent as replies to or forwardings of respective linked to e-mail messages in the level above, and where like titled e-mail messages in a level below the given level below the given level are hierarchically related to related to respective e-mail messages in the given level to which they were respectively sent as replies to or forwardings of, and where the like-titled e-mail messages have a same substantive title (Shiman: 0156, 0157, 0158); and displaying indicia of the e-mail messages in a tree structure corresponding to the hierarchical structure, where the tree shows which of the like-titled e-mail messages were sent as replies to or forwardings of a same e-mail message, and also shows which of the like-titled e-mail messages were received as replies to or forwardings of a same e-mail message, whereby the user can view the tree to visually determine a logical sequence of exchanging the like-titled e-mail messages (Shiman: 0156, 0157, 0158; Hamp: column 7, lines 34-65). Shiman-Hamp does not specifically teach the arrangement of sent messages into such a hierarchy. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to include the interface of a hierarchy in displaying received e-mail messages to display sent messages in the same manner. The motivation for doing so lies in the fact that sent messages need the same organizational conveniences provided for those messages received, and would thus allow for a way for the user to trace the e-mails that he or she sent to other users, just as he or she can trace the e-mails that he or she received.

As per claim 8, Shiman-Hamp teaches a method of an e-mail client to display messages sent and received by a user, the method comprising: accessing e-mail messages previously received by the user (Shiman: 0156, 0157, 0158); forming a hierarchy of mutually related e-mail

messages based on information indicating which messages were sent as replies-to or forwardings-of other messages (Shiman: 0156, 0157, 0158); and displaying a tree structure corresponding to the hierarchy, the tree showing which messages were sent as replies-to or forwardings-of which respective other messages in the hierarchy (Shiman: 0156, 0157, 0158).

As per claim 9, Shiman-Hamp teaches a method according to claim 8, where the hierarch has a property that when a first like-titled e-mail message in the hierarchy was sent chronologically after a second like-titled e-mail message, then the first like-titled e-mail message is lower in the hierarchy than the second message (Shiman: 0156, 0157, 0158).

As per claim 10, Shiman-Hamp teaches a method according to claim 8, where the e-mail messages of the hierarchy are mutually related by having a same substantive title (Shiman: 0156, 0157, 0158).

As per claim 11, Shiman-Hamp teaches the electronic-mail transmission/reception apparatus according to claim 1, wherein: said sorting unit sorts the electronic mails in accordance with sender addresses thereof, and said list displaying unit displays a hierarchical structure of the sender addresses (Shiman: 0156, 0157, 0158).

As per claim 12, Shiman-Hamp teaches a display, but does not specifically teach the separate windowing (or panes) of the tree structure relationship between the email messages and the attributes of the email messages. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to include different windows or panes for the email tree structure and the email attributes, as it is highly well known in the art. Outlook Express, for example, employs the use of separate display areas for separate email functions. To include that teaching into Shiman-Hamp would

have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to enable more efficient organization of the display.

*Response to Arguments*

Applicant's arguments filed August 5, 2005 have been fully considered and have respectfully been traversed by the new grounds of rejection.


*Conclusion*

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Tanim Hossain whose telephone number is 571/272-3881. The examiner can normally be reached on 8:30 am - 5 pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Jason Cardone can be reached at 571/272-3933. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

Tanim Hossain  
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Art Unit 2145

  
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